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ACTION RESEARCH—A CRITIQUE

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INTRODUCTION

One glance at the voluminous bibliography to this paper will be enough to convince the reader that action research is a growing field. Every year the number of articles and books concerned with this type of research increases. The following statement from the 1956 ASCD Yearbook certainly is indicative of the increased popularity of action research:

The procedure, however, known as "action research" does have so much to commend it that one might well hope to see a time when school staff members would spend a part of each school day in that kind of activity as a regularly scheduled phase of school work.¹

This introduction will attempt to answer two questions; what is action research, and how did it develop?

Perhaps the best way to answer the first question is to turn to the work of the man who has defined action research most frequently. He is Stephen Corey, Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University. In sum, he would say that action research is research undertaken by those in the field (teachers, administrators, and supervisors) in order to improve their own practices.²

In order to really know what action research is, one must know the common characteristics of it; those characteristics which are generally mentioned in the literature. First, action research is based on concrete problems in actual school situations, and no attempt is made to isolate out a factor and study it alone, divorced from the environment which gave it meaning. In plain terms, problems are studied in the actual situations out of which they arise. The main reason for action research is the improvement of practice. This can only be done if teachers are able to change their attitudes and behavior. One of the best vehicles for social change is pressure from the group with which

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one works. Because the problems of a teacher are often shared with other teachers in the same school, action research has tended to become cooperative, involving many or all of the teachers in the school. Group interaction has become one of the most important characteristics of action research.³

From this short description alone, it can be seen that the action research movement is an almost inevitable consequence of the environment which fostered it. There are two characteristics of the American educational scene which are particularly important in setting the stage for action research. These are the growth of the use of scientific method in solving educational problems, and the development of the interest in social interaction now known as group dynamics. These two are closely related.⁴

The use of scientific method, which was advocated by Binet and Simon, Thorndike, Galton, James, and Dewey, along with many others, was an important factor in the development of what is today known as progressive education. It is interesting to go back to the literature of the 1920's to see what clues we can find concerning the beginnings of action research, even though Wann and others say that there are very few references to it before 1948.⁵ *Research for Teachers*, by Buckingham, had a chapter entitled "The Teacher as Research Worker,"⁶ and developed many of the concepts of action research. This book was published in 1926. *Education and the Philosophy of Experimentalism* by Childs, published in 1931, is another example of the scientific influence which set the scene for action research.⁷ Although Dewey is never mentioned in the literature as an initiator of action research, it is likely that some of his works would reveal specific evidence that Dewey knew of, and approved of, the concept of action research.

Dewey's scientific orientation, so clearly seen in the title of *The Sources of a Science of Education*,⁸ gives ample proof that scientific education logically implies action research:

The answer is that (1) educational practices provide the data, the subject-matter, which form the problems of inquiry. . . . These educational practices are also (2) the final test of value of the conclusions of all researches. . . . Actual activities in *educating* test the worth of scientific results. . . . They may be scientific in some other field, but not in education until they serve educational purposes, and whether they really serve or not can be found out only in practice.

In a chapter significantly entitled "The Teacher as Research Worker," Dewey says "It seems to me that the contribution that

might come from class-room teachers are a comparatively neglected field; or, to change the metaphor, an unworked mine."⁹

Along with this emphasis on scientific method came the concern for "well-adjusted" students, the interest in how people behave in social groups. Increase in group interaction in the classroom has been a prominent feature of education in this country. Science and sociability came together in the work of Kurt Lewin, who began the scientific study of groups, trying to determine when they reached maximum productivity.¹⁰ This interest in the dynamics of group interaction has formed the basis of the characteristic of action research noted earlier—that teachers tend to work as a group in doing research on their common problems.

Action research, therefore, is a direct and logical outcome of the progressive position. After showing children how to work together to solve their problems, the next step was for teachers to adopt the methods they had been teaching their children, and learn to solve their own problems cooperatively.

THE CASE FOR ACTION RESEARCH

Before any evaluation of action research can be made, the arguments for and against it must be reviewed. There is no doubt that there are many advantages to this type of research.¹¹

When many minds are at work on the same problem, a larger number of ways of looking at the problem will certainly emerge. There will be more suggested solutions to the problem, and more effective criticism of each proposed solution. If the group can select from a wide range of possibilities, the chance of finding a successful answer is certainly higher than if the group only considered one solution to the problem.

However, group process is not easy to carry out. Like everything else, action research thrives under certain conditions and becomes stagnant in others. Corey says that the favorable conditions include the following: A willingness to admit limitations (especially on the part of administrators), ample opportunities to invent, encouragement of new ideas, time allowed for experimentation, mutual trust of the people involved, and a knowledge by the participants of the fundamentals of group process.¹²

There is little doubt that if these conditions are met, action research can change current classroom practice. Certainly it is better than merely presenting the research results of professionals, as teachers must become personally involved in changing their classroom behavior, and few teachers become personally involved in an issue of the *Review of Educational Research*. It is difficult to change behavior

without changing attitudes and values as well. This "re-education" of the teacher is considered to be a social process—that is, if teachers work together on a common problem, there is a better chance that their values, as well as their attitudes, will change.¹³ Action research can involve teachers in problems, making the possibility of value change quite high.

It seems, logically enough, that "The longer a practice has been engaged in, the harder it is to see its limitations and to change."¹⁴ Naturally, a teacher with many years of service who has found a pattern of teaching which she considers best will be very uncomfortable in an action research situation, unless Corey's favorable conditions exist.¹⁵ Miel and others have suggested that there are ways of making teachers who have fallen into a pattern dissatisfied with their situation.¹⁶

Because teachers do tend to find one way of doing things as they advance in years, action research has been much more successful in the lower grades than in the senior high school.¹⁷ There are many other factors which may be responsible for this. The departmental feeling is probably stronger in high school than in the grades, and there is a strong possibility that if a high school teacher works outside of her course of study, she may be stepping on the toes of another teacher. Also, the high school teacher probably handles more pupils per day and has them for shorter periods of time than does the elementary teacher. This means less familiarity with each pupil, particularly in regard to his personality. The average elementary school teacher is probably younger, more flexible, and more willing to change. She is not bound in tight subject matter compartments, remembers more of her own academic training, and is still selecting teaching methods and materials from a fairly wide repertoire. Also, it may be that a teaching staff composed largely of the female of the species can cooperate better than one contaminated by male influences. Obviously all these arguments (particularly the last) are purely speculative, as the question of the superiority of action research in elementary and grade schools has been overlooked in the literature. At any rate, the action research movement has had considerable success on the lower grade levels.

In every instance mentioned in the appendix to this paper, the teachers who were involved in the action research projects were generally enthusiastic. They seemed to feel that the staff worked more as a unit than before the research, that staff members felt closer together with the knowledge that they shared problems and goals, and that respect for individuals, both teachers and students, had increased.¹⁸

Naturally, teachers also developed confidence in their ability to do research, and to some extent became interested in other research activities, both action projects like their own and more "scholarly" research. They became more flexible in their thinking and more receptive to new ideas. A greater understanding of the children with whom they worked seemed to be the result. One of the most promising features of action research is that the method of working together to solve problems seems to work well in low socio-economic areas, both in the schoolroom and in the community, where it is used in motivating people to improve their living conditions.

It can now be said that action research has been given a fair hearing. Its accomplishments and potentialities have been spoken of in glowing terms, following the lead of almost every other publication on the topic. Before reaching a conclusion, however, there are some methodological and theoretical arguments against action research which must be presented.

THE CASE AGAINST ACTION RESEARCH—METHOD

The first argument is that in all the rather massive bibliography compiled for this article there are only three articles of a critical nature, and not one of these is more than five pages in length. This is certainly not a healthy situation. No solution (particularly in education) is so successful that it is above criticism. The only logical conclusion that can be made is that school people have accepted action research in an unthinking and passive manner, and that writers have hesitated to write about the negative aspects of it, as that would impede "progress."

One of the most important procedural problems concerns the lack of familiarity with the basic techniques of research on the part of teachers, administrators, and supervisors. Corey places the blame for this on the teacher training institutions. Most of these school people have had statistics courses, but do not remember much of what they learned.¹⁹ Even familiarity with the basic notions of statistics such as central tendency and correlation would be enough to allow teachers to perform simple research with some success, but often even this limited knowledge is not to be found in a teaching staff. Judging from the reports of action research programs, teachers assimilate this knowledge rapidly when they see that it will aid them in solving a specific problem. Perhaps teachers of statistics courses in the colleges would have more success if their courses were focussed on specific problems their students would be meeting when they actually began teaching.

Along with this lack of statistical knowledge is the general feel-

ing that research is no place for an amateur. As Corey says, "The method of science was adopted not by the practitioners but by the professional students of education."²⁰ Further proof comes from the fact that of the nine hundred men and women who made up the American Educational Research Association in 1952, only ten per cent were supervisors, administrators, and principals; and a very scant one per cent were classroom teachers.²¹ Because of this notion of the "professionalism" of research, many teachers are afraid to try it themselves.

There are many others who feel that teachers are not qualified to do research.²² Borg also blames the teacher training institutions for the widespread ignorance teachers exhibit in all phases of research procedure.²³ He found that out of one hundred students in four education classes only thirteen could name one educational journal, while five could name two relating to education, and two students could name more than two. This group of students included thirty-nine juniors, thirty-eight seniors, and twenty-three graduate students, all working for degrees in education. Perhaps if students and teachers became interested and involved in "professional" research, there would soon be no need for action research.

The time element also tends to disqualify teachers, whose schedules are already overloaded, from doing research. (In this connection it must be remembered that the group process itself is a tremendous consumer of time. It may take longer for the group to become a workable unit than it takes to solve the problem.) Some administrators are not willing to grant teachers this time, and perhaps they are justified. Certainly if teachers take enough time from their teaching assignments the project is not worth it, as there is no need to reduce the quality of present education in order to produce better results in the future. If the teacher becomes a researcher there is no reason why she should not be *made* to become a guidance counselor, nurse, musician, or psychiatrist, in the name of "professional responsibility."

If teachers must meet during school hours to discuss their research, then the problem becomes financial as well as temporal, as substitute teachers must be hired. Again the quality of present education is diminished.

School administrators who refuse to spend time and money on research projects for their teachers are merely reiterating the college situation, although in colleges there are millions available for research in the physical sciences, and thousands of people make careers out of research. The Land Grant Colleges use about twenty per cent of their total budgets for research in the physical sciences, while at Teachers

College, Columbia, seven per cent goes for educational research. (This is a high figure for educational institutions.) In 1945 and 1946, the two hundred and fifty-three teachers colleges in the United States, with a budget totalling forty-eight million dollars, spent only two-tenths of one per cent of it on organized research.²⁴ With this situation in colleges, it seems unfair to ask the school administrator to make room for another item in his already bulging budget.

Another methodological argument against action research originates in the current conception of group process. The "democratic" leader is the man who allows the group to take over for itself. Leadership becomes situational; that is, in certain situations one person leads, in others someone else leads.²⁵ An able group leader must be sensitive enough to be aware of the needs and wishes of each individual he deals with in the group. If people of this sort are not available in the school, group cooperation and consensus may be difficult or impossible to obtain. This could lead to failure concerning the action research, distrust of teacher for colleagues, and general lowering of school morale²⁶. It is unfortunate that we do not know how often this condition occurs, as the only research summaries which get into print are the successful ones.

THE CASE AGAINST ACTION RESEARCH—THEORY

First of all, when action research has been completed, its results are quickly utilized by the teacher and put into practice. The teachers then either find some other area for research, or go back to teaching school. The important follow-up questions, such as what happens to a teacher *after* action research results have been put into practice, are seldom asked. It would seem that teachers would have greater cause to become stagnant, if they did incorporate action research findings into their teaching, as they could then defend their techniques on the grounds of scientific objectivity, saying that "this is the best way because four years ago we tested it through action research."

Mr. Corey answers this by saying that it is perfectly all right for a teacher to keep on using action research findings, as all her future classes will (statistically) be very much like the class she was teaching when the action research was done.²⁷ In simple terms, a teacher's class of today represents a random sample of all the classes she will have in the future. It must be seen that Corey's argument is a crucial one for action research, in that if it could be refuted there would be no point of doing research at all. If each year brought a different type of group into the classroom the research would only be valid for the year in which it was done. then the whole tedious process would have to be done over again.

It would be practically impossible to refute Mr. Corey's statistics, but perhaps we can ignore that fact and consider the problem from the perspective of common sense. From this point of view, it would seem that Mr. Corey is wrong. Very few people stay in one place for long in this country. There is movement into cities and away from them, and constant rearrangement within the city. Some areas age rapidly, and are considered socially unacceptable by those who previously lived there. Also, housing restrictions against minority groups may be relaxed, allowing even more movement of population. If prejudice ever becomes socially unacceptable, there will be population changes on a huge scale.

What does this mean to a teacher? It means that she may do an action research project in 1955 with an all-white class. In 1957 she may have four or five Negroes and a few Mexicans. Instead of educating the children of office workers, she may be teaching the progeny of the workers who labor on the assembly line of the big new factory which has just come to town. Also, Mr. Corey forgets that teachers move frequently. There is some evidence that a "prestige hierarchy" of schools exist, so that teachers are constantly trying to get into the preferred schools.²⁸ This would mean that a young teacher who did an action research study in the first or second year of teaching might be in an entirely different type of school in two or three years. If movement of the general population, and of teachers, is accepted as valid, then Mr. Corey's argument is of little importance, even though he is still blessed with statistical sanction.

Miel and others are certain that the individual school should be the main unit of curriculum change.²⁹ This position must also be adopted by action research enthusiasts, as their research must change practice in the individual school. Making the local school an autonomous unit raises many problems. First, Wiles is concerned with the problem of whether or not a local school must *do* all the research that it uses.³⁰ The action research approach leads to the position that the local school must become a research center, as only research tested in the classrooms of that school will be valid. If the school becomes a research center, it becomes divorced from the "professional" research.

The autonomous nature of the local school advocated by those who believe in action research leads to further problems. Education should be emphasizing individual commonalities as well as individual differences, yet the autonomous local school may actually be a threat to a consistent nationwide program of general education. Teachers as well as students must adopt a new picture of a shrinking world in which people, if they are to exist, must see how alike they are in

almost everything. Action research, which focuses attention on the local school and community, works in direct opposition, and becomes another centrifugal force in our society. It is said that action research combats specialization by giving teachers common goals and problems. But perhaps it only changes the unit of specialization from the individual teacher to the individual school. It may increase the problems of city, state, regional, and national coordination of education.

The next criticisms all relate to one central question: Is action research really *research* or is it something else? First of all, there is a confusion of terms (or perhaps an overabundance of terms) being used to describe action research. A study of the literature reveals that when one is doing action research, he is also doing field experimentation, operational research, research action, cooperative research, evaluation research, service research, and evaluative process. It has also been made synonymous with in-service training.³¹ Interestingly enough, all these terms seem to have identical meanings, and they all seem to stress the "scientific" nature of the process.

Now we can consider action research as a valid type of scientific experimentation. Goode and Hatt have put down in simple terms the major differences between the scientific and the common sense approach.³² Each statement can be compared to the methodology of action research:

1. The scientific method goes beyond the solution of the practical problem. . . . In other words, the practical problem may be solved in the area of common sense, but not in the scientific frame of reference, for here many problems remain even after "the beans are cooked."

In contrast with the scientific approach, action research is *only* concerned with the solution of the practical problems. There are no problems after "the beans are cooked," and if any did exist they would not be recognized as problems.

2. The scientific method of solution involves controlled experimentation. . . . For this, precise definition, measurement, and control of the variables must be employed in an experimental fashion.

From our previous discussion of the inadequacy of the average teacher as far as doing research is concerned, it should be clear that action research does not measure up to this criterion.

3. The scientific solution looks for broader generalizations. . . . He (the scientist) searches for those facts (negative as well

as positive) wherever they may be found, that constitute empirical uniformities. . . . Thus the practical solution is merely an intermediate step and not the end of the road for the scientist.

Action research is ruled out by definition, as this method is agreed to have no validity outside of the school in which it was carried out. Also, published reports of action research projects tend to accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative whenever possible. For the action researcher, the practical solution is the end of the road.

4. Scientific experimentation is set against an existing body of generalizations . . . he (the scientist) wishes to create a system of theory.

Here again action research falls short, as there is no wish, and no chance, to create a theoretical system. Foshay and others have said that action research produces principles, and "These principles are related both to statements of fundamental theory and to real situations. . . . They stand between the two. They are 'middle-ground' principles."³³ One may legitimately question the worth of building up a large body of knowledge which is not theory, not real practice, but is related to both. What does one do with these "principles"? There seems to be little which could be done with them.

Another related problem concerns the determination of what action research is "good" and what is "bad." Are we to judge according to how much the teachers change, how much the pupils change, how classroom practice is altered, or how good the statistics are? Ordinarily, in true research, validity and reliability can be used, but the reports never seem to mention how valid or reliable an action research study was. What are the grounds for placing confidence in action research? Wiles has seen that it is not enough to say (as Corey says) that all problem-solving exists at some level on a continuum; this does nothing to improve our confidence in action research.³⁴ Perhaps it would be better to define action research as quantified common sense rather than as a form of scientific, empirical research.

Because of the great emphasis on statistical methods in research, a problem which cannot be handled statistically is often considered outside of the research realm. Therefore those problems which have handy (and simple) statistical tools already attached to them are the problems chosen by action research workers. There are some problems which defy the statistical approach, and are labeled as being outside the field of research. It is ironic that teachers could be of great help in solving these problems by simply and objectively describing what they see, and not by trying to use experimental techniques commonly called research. This tendency to conceive of research in

numerical terms is one shared by many. When Mr. Brubacher wrote an article on the philosophy of education, he felt it necessary to *prove* that philosophy is an area in which research can be done.³⁵ Perhaps educational leaders are like Pope, who "lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came."³⁶ It is certainly true that the statistical emphasis of action research projects has made them ignore "some sources of problems that would carry us toward durable and massive solutions."³⁷ There is little that is durable or massive about the typical action research study.

With this urge for statistical sanction can be found another typical attitude: an assumed sanctity for anything which is new. Teachers often feel that they must change to keep up with the times. When educational research, action or otherwise, reaches a high level of dependability and predictability there will be more valid reasons for change. Any step is not necessarily a step forward. As Mr. Stoddard has said, "It would be hard to prove that research invariably means progress."³⁸ With this sanctity of the present comes a denial of the past, which presents further problems. We are perhaps falling into the trap which Goethe warned us about: (He) "... who cannot give an account of three thousand years remains in the darkness of inexperience, can live only from one day to another."³⁹

SUMMARY

It should be evident by now that action research is a symptom of the times in which we live. Taking a contextual leap, consider briefly the work of N. B. F. Maier of the University of Michigan which won the annual reward as the outstanding paper read before the American Association for the Advancement of Science.⁴⁰ This man taught rats to give a certain response to a given situation, then proceeded to confuse them by not letting the expected conditions occur. The rats no longer knew what to expect. At the same time he played a strong stream of compressed air over the rats, forcing them to act, but in a situation in which no action could solve the problem. The rats soon developed a condition quite like hysteria as it appears in man:

Confronted by such ceaseless contradictions in a world which demands of us a great show of outward confidence and decision, we Americans tend to do two things: In general, we 'play safe'—a little of this and some of that—keeping a foot in both camps. . . . We follow the middle of the road. . . . But our tingling persons, thus checked, yearn for the clean release of unequivocal action. And so we have to resort to the other alternative, and we

are startled to find ourselves periodically going in for slogans with a whoop of enthusiasm.⁴¹

Foshay and others have said that "Cooperative action research is an approach to making what we do consistent with what we believe."⁴² This is simply not so. Action research merely focuses attention on the doing, and eliminates most of the necessity for believing. We are living in a "doing" age, and action research allows people the privilege of "doing" something. This method could easily become an end in itself. Mr. Stoddard is definitely concerned with this when he says, "There is no end value in statistics and none in research. Research means simply *Men Thinking*. The structure of research is a substructure on which we try to erect other values, hoping that these values will be sustained and will lead to the good life, however defined."⁴³

One of the main criticisms of the so-called "activity program" was that the activity was not aimed at any particular goals—it tended to become activity for its own sake. Perhaps action research is a logical outcome of the activity movement. The question to ask now is whether or not we want teachers who spend much of their time measuring and figuring, playing with what Dylan Thomas would call "easy hobby games for little engineers." It would seem that action research supporters have many question to ask. It seems unfortunate that questions are not asked more often.

FOOTNOTES

1. Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, *What Shall the High Schools Teach?* (Washington, 1956), p. 221.
2. This definition can be found in any of the bibliography listings for "Corey, Stephen."
3. Chandos Reid, "Involvement is Important in Research," *Ed. Leadership*, X (April, 1953), 442-443.
4. The relationship has never been intensively explored, however.
5. Kenneth Wann, "Action Research in Schools," *Review of Ed. Research*, XXIII (Oct. 1953), 337.
6. Burdette Buckingham, *Research for Teachers* (New York, 1926, Ch. 10.
7. New York: Century Co.
8. p. 33.
9. *ibid.* p. 46. In *How We Think* (New York and Washington, 1933) Dewey also says, "They (inferences) are also tested, after one has been adopted, by action to see whether the consequences that are anticipated in thought occur in fact." (p. 97).
10. Cited in Arthur Foshay and John Green, "Techniques of Curriculum Research," *Rev. of Ed. Research*, XXIV (June, 1954), 248.
11. Virgil Herrick, "The Survey Versus the Cooperative Study," *Ed. Administration and Supervision*, XXXIV (Dec., 1948), 458.
12. Stephen Corey, "Conditions Conducive to Curricular Experimentation," *E. Ad. and Super.* XXXIV (April, 1950), 209-216.

13. N. S. S. E. Yearbook 41; Part II (Bloomington, Ill., 1942), 271-272.
14. Stephen Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices*, 145.
15. Taba, Brady, and Robinson, *Intergroup Education in Public Schools*, Washington D. C., 1952, p. 19.
16. Alice Miel, *Changing the Curriculum: A Social Process* (New York, 1946), 44-47.
17. See the studies listed in the Appendix.
18. See No. 6 in Appendix.
19. Stephen Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices*, p. 145.
20. *ibid.* p. 3.
21. *ibid.* p. 4-5.
22. Carter Good and Douglas Scates, *Methods of Research* (New York, 1954) p. 720. Also J. A. Hamilton, "Who Should Plan the Curriculum?" *Education* LXXIII (Feb., 1953), 388-389.
23. Walter Borg, "Teachers as Intelligent Consumers of Research," *School and Society* LXXIII (June, 1951), 357-359.
24. Hollis Caswell, "Research in the Curriculum," *Ed. Leadership*, VII (April, 1950), p. 443.
25. See Kenneth Benne, Bozidar Muntyan, *Human Relations in Curriculum Change* (New York, 1951).
26. It must be admitted that this is at least a possibility.
27. Stephen Corey, "Action Research by Teachers and the Population Sampling Problem," *J. of Ed. Psych.*, XLII (October, 1952), p. 333.
28. Whether this is due to higher status, better living conditions, or easier children to work with is difficult to say.
29. Alice Miel, *op. cit.* p. 69.
30. Kimball Wiles, "Can We Sharpen the Concept of Action Research?" *Ed. Leadership*, X (April, 1953), p. 410.
31. *ibid.* 338, 408-409.
32. William J. Goode and Paul K. Hatt, *Methods in Social Research*, (New York, 1952), p. 33.
33. Arthur Foshay and Max Goodson, "Some Reflections on Cooperative Action Research," *E. Leadership*, X (April, 1953), p. 416.
34. Wiles, *op. cit.* 408-410.
35. In Isaac Kandel, "Educational Research," *School and Society*, LXXII (October, 1950), p. 232.
36. One indication of this is the fact that Kandel quotes Pope as saying "... lispd in numbers because the numbers came." There are three textual errors in Kandel's version.
37. George Stoddard, "Educational Research Lacks Impact: It Avoids Controversies and Human Values," *Nation's Schools*, XLIX (May, 1952) p. 45.
38. *ibid.* p. 44.
39. Quoted in Kurt Lewin, *A Dynamic Theory of Personality* (London, New York, 1935), p. 173.
40. In Robert Lynd *Knowledge for What?* (Princeton, New Jersey, 1939), 103-104.
41. *ibid.* p. 104.
42. Foshay and Goodson, *op. cit.* p. 411.
43. Stoddard, *op. cit.* p. 46.

APPENDIX

A List of Typical Action Research Studies

1. Banks, Tressa; Farley, Edgar S. and others: "We Tested Some Beliefs about the Biographical Method," *School Review*, LIX (March, 1951), 157-163. The thesis was that children would know more about historical characters they admired than those they didn't. Very inconclusive results—not worth reporting, as many would accept their results.
2. Evans, Hubert M. (ed.): "Cooperative Research and Curriculum Improvement," *T. C. Record*, (April, 1950), LI, pps. 407-474. A summary of the work done in Battle Creek, Michigan to work out a tenth grade general education program.
3. Committee on Operations Research: *Operations Research with Special Reference to Non-Military Operations*. Washington, D. C.: National Research Council, April, 1951. Makes parallels between the operations research done in World War II in studies of British and U. S. forces and general business situations. Operations research is here described as "qualitative Common Sense."
4. Smith, Mary Neel: "Action Research to Improve Teacher Planning Meetings," *School Review*, LX (March, 1952), 142-150. (A good summary of this work is contained in Stephen Corey, *Action Research to Improve School Practices*.)
5. Taba, Hilda; Brady, Elizabeth; and Robinson, John: *Intergroup Education in Public Schools* (Washington, D. C., 1952). A report of a study of intergroup education, begun as small committees, later expanded into fewer groups working on more general topics. Concentrated in the elementary school situation. It was done with a great many cooperating schools throughout the country.
6. Foshay, Arthur, Wann, Kenneth D. and associates: *Children's Social Values* (New York, 1954). An account of the work of teachers in Springfield, Missouri done to determine whether or not there is a way to teach values systematically. The conclusions to this study really should not be published.
7. Collier, John: "United States Indian Administration as a Laboratory of Ethnic Relations," *Social Research*, I (September, 1945), 265-303. Not a curriculum study, but a well-written account of how the principle of action research can be put to work in helping people to solve their own problems. Many other items to be found in the bibliography are concerned with specific action research projects, but these are representative.

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10. Broadus, Robert N.: "The Literature of Educational Research," *School and Society*, LXXVII (January, 1953), 8-10.
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GROUP DYNAMICS AND THE ROLE OF AUTHORITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Since the turn of the century vast changes have occurred in both the objectives and the methods of higher education. Although some colleges and universities have not been noticeably influenced by the reorientation and some as yet have been only partially affected, there can be no doubt that a very significant reform is being effected with our growing knowledge of the psychology of learning. This paper is a brief account of a new philosophy of education now current in one small college, which is coming into general focus in many small colleges today.

No longer content to have students acquire only factual, academic knowledge, there seems to be almost universal agreement among modern educators that the responsibility of higher education is much broader. Modern educational theory assumes that the developing of the kinds of skills and understanding students will need if they are to become mature adult citizens is more important than the mere compilation of knowledge. The *new* criterion of successful learning is not ability to memorize the professor's biases and play verbal ping pong with him on the examination, but actual *behavior change* of some sort, as a result of learning. Thus, the new questions to be asked are: under what conditions do students learn most effectively, how do they react to the learning experiences, and what kind of changes in behavior can be identified as the result of their learning experience?

The real differences in objectives may be detected most easily in terms of the differences in method. Modern educators believe that application of the results of learning is most likely to occur if students work in an environment which is more like that of the world outside the walls of the classroom. In fact, they prefer to think of the classroom as a discussion center rather than a "lecture hall." They like to think of the "classroom" as a good place to practice the democratic procedures students hear so much about, yet have little opportunity to experience in the average college classroom. The authoritarian centered lecture hall affords little opportunity for the student to display anything but passive acceptance of the professors views, if the student expects to "pass the course." Disagreement, especially on controversial issues, may sometimes be permitted and even encouraged by the professor, but there is often the subtle implication that those students who openly disagree with his opinion might receive a lower grade.

In recent years there has been a definite change away from the formal lecture system and toward the discussion method at Northland College. Discussion may be properly termed the most common "method" of teaching at Northland, but only if it is clearly understood that there is no single method of discussion. Nor would this be desirable. Experiment is the essence of this kind of teaching which standardization would destroy. But whatever techniques are employed, discussion is focussed upon a problem to be explored. The kind of knowledge we hope students will acquire is primarily concerned with an understanding of reasons and relationships, rather than isolated bits of information. Real understanding comes from *active* participation of the mind, not passive retention of the memory. When the student first encounters a problem there is a groping about in the dark, followed, if activity is successful, by gradual clarification. Thus, Whitehead views learning as essentially a cyclical process when he speaks about the stage of romance, of precision, and of generalization.¹ However one may phrase it, the significant feature of understanding is the actual process itself, which Whitehead so well describes.

Discussion differs from lecture oriented courses in that the task for the student is to produce, in terms of an answer, something that has not been given to him previously from the professor or the textbook. In the average lecture course the student is only required to remember and reproduce a replica of what the professor has said in class, together with whatever reading assignments he may make, in order to pass the course. The discussion centered class on the other hand requires the student to contribute something more than the mere recall or recognition of information. This is the reason that we value the discussion technique so highly. We want to know, through question and answer, whether the act of knowing is really taking place. This is, of course, not a novel idea; in the *Phaedrus* Plato maintains that the teacher is concerned with the "intelligent word graven in the soul of the learner, which can defend itself, and knows when to speak and when to be silent."

In terms of objectives we are a united faculty, but in classroom techniques the common aims permit a high degree of individuality. Instructors are constantly experimenting singly and in groups—to find new and better ways of teaching. Some of the experiments are very interesting—student planned discussions, preceptorial sections, group terms papers, but there would be little point in describing them

¹ Whitehead, A. N., "The Rhythm of Education" in *The Aims of Education*. The MacMillan Co., 1929.

here. Individually they have no specific role in the general picture of our instruction, though collectively their existence is one of the significant features of our teaching. Of course, we also have lectures in the traditional sense, but not as many as one finds in larger institutions. Most of our lectures occur in the natural sciences where both methods and conclusions are not generally major points of controversy.

In the social sciences and humanities, on the other hand, lectures play only a minor role in the classroom since we desire to foster the wish for truth, not the conviction that some particular creed is the truth. The lecture—at its best—is a process of presenting knowledge, however complex to the student and, as such, the lecture is primarily an act for the lecturer. The student has little recourse but to follow the lecturer. If the student is a good listener and the professor desires to teach, rather than merely to inform, the student may be able to “follow through” the number of phases that lead to a full understanding of the subject, though this probably occurs less frequently than the average lecturer assumes. Even under the most desirable circumstances any knowledge the student receives from attending lectures is derivative. This objection is, however, by no means the chief one: there is the grave difficulty that whatever opinions and conclusions the professor favors must be accepted on faith, since there is seldom time for all students to question them.

In spite of recent trends in higher education toward relaxing the shackles of authority the professor is still expected to be an authoritarian leader, more concerned with lecturing on his specialized subject than with what goes on in the student's mind. Many professors still assume that if the student conforms in external behavior and meets the standard of achievement they consider particularly laudable, the student is “on his way” toward becoming an educated adult. Moreover, the average professor is often reluctant to give up his traditional role of lawgiver and judge.

The introduction of participative action methods in the college classroom presents many difficulties. Many colleges are still authoritarian, and professors are frequently authoritarian by training and personality. Also, there is the tendency on the part of the average college student to expect the professor to fit into his stereotyped role. If the professor attempts to move from traditional authoritarian procedures to participative group activity, he frequently finds students reluctant to accept non-authoritarian methods. Often they complain that the professor “doesn't make us do anything” or that they are not “getting anywhere.” Thelen noted similar attitudes on the part of

pre-college students toward the introduction of non-authoritarian methods in the classroom.²

The superiority of modern educational theory over traditional methodology is due almost entirely to the substitution of Dewey's theory that students "learn by doing" rather than by authority. Any attempt to revive authority in the classroom is a retrograde step; education in its fulfillment occurs as a result of dialogue. In the words of Dewey, "Ideas which are not communicated, shared, and reborn in expression are but soliloquy, and soliloquy is but broken and imperfect thought."³ These reflections of Dewey are taken from a work in which he maintains that the solution of social problems depends upon the establishment of true communities, or what, in a more elementary stage, sociologists often call "primary groups." Northland College is concerned with similar social goals; the curriculum is constructed to help create those mental habits which will enable students to acquire knowledge and form sound judgments for themselves. This kind of training provides a common ground for the give-and-take of real discussion; and at Northland College the students find a prototype of the genuine community, at least in that aspect with which Dewey holds to be most significant. Although the kind of instruction I have described exists in many other colleges, here it has become the vital principle of a small society. It is not, of course, a perfect community but it affords the kinds of experience which both faculty and students will find valuable in becoming members of other communities however large.

As with all things new, "easy does it." Some compromise path between the old and the new philosophy must be found. The field of group dynamics is so new that even the experts in it are reluctant to say how the transition can best be accomplished. On the other hand, the accumulative evidence in favor of non-authoritarian methods indicates the necessity of finding a way to make the change. One thing seems to be clear; the small college can more easily effect the transition from authoritarian to non-authoritarian methods in teaching because of the fewer number of students the average professor has in each class. Northland College, as well as many other small colleges, is incorporating the discussion method into all veins of its curriculum.

² Herbert A. Thelen, "Resistance to Change of Teaching Methods," *Progressive Ed.*, May, 1949.

"Group Dynamics in Instruction: Principle of Least Group Size," *School Review*, March, 1949.

³ John Dewey, *The Public and Its Problems* (New York: Gateway Books, 1927), p. 218.

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POWER IN THE TEACHING SITUATION

Roberta Williams

Miss Tarian stands up in front of her class of thirty high school juniors. All eyes are on her; hands are on desks. Quietness echoes from each of the three white walls and even from the black one.

"She certainly has those kids under control," whispers one teacher to another as they pass in the hall. Perhaps even Miss Tarian is whispering very quietly to herself, "Well, I must say, I never have any trouble with discipline. These kids are right under my thumb." Are they? In a certain sense they are. But is this sort of "control" something to be valued? And, getting down under this stock "ideal" teaching situation, where do the actual sources of power in the classroom lie?

First of all, how does Miss Tarian look at her situation? How does the teacher see his power over children? In a sense, he gets himself into conflicts which he himself does not recognize. He feels guilty about forcefully leading a group. He feels somehow that it is always nasty and hostile to make decisions for a group and always kind to let students do what they want, when actually degree of decision-making should depend on the maturity of the group rather than on kindness.

At the same time that he feels "mean" to give clear-cut and forceful commands and leadership to the children, the teacher feels that he is a failure if the children do not do everything he says. He identifies himself with certain rules and regulations, and feels that any infraction of these rules is a threat to his own person. He also feels one-hundred percent responsible for the conduct of every student, from the way school work is done to the way hair is combed. He is therefore insecure because misbehavior makes him feel personally threatened, and also because he is unable to have complete power over the student. Thus, the teacher sees a discipline problem as a situation in which the student attacks the forces imposed by him. The teacher usually answers by attacking back in order to regain "the upper hand." He is not really concerned with his influence upon students, but rather with keeping his commands intact, unattacked. The withdrawing student is not seen to be a problem. Although he, too, is refusing to comply with forces imposed by the teacher, the teacher does not realize this, or care, really, so long as his control is not frustrated.

What is the teacher's definition of power in the setting just described, and what power actually is present? The teacher just described feels, first, that he "has power over the kids," only insofar as they comply with the forces which he places on them. So long as

they do not disturb him, he feels that he controls them. Certain writers in the field of education can help in our attempt to redefine the nature of the power at work in this teaching situation. Waller says in *The Sociology of Teaching* that "the power of the teacher to pass rules is not limited, but his power to enforce rules is, and so is his power to control attitudes towards rules."¹ The human being cannot be controlled from without. The teacher in the situation described represents an adult enemy to the spontaneous power trying to realize itself within the individual child. For the teacher imposes certain social forces and regulations upon the child which necessarily squash some of his natural impulses. The child, as has been mentioned, may withdraw into an imaginary world of his own. Or he may find some way that he can do something to protest which is outside the range of the rule imposed. (Waller gives the example of Johnny shuffling his feet on the way to the blackboard.) Children, then, are slippery and will not stick like glue under the fingers of a Miss Tarian.

What then does the teacher do? Does he despairingly slump into a chair and say "It's no use; I have no control over these beasts."? For they disturb him, harass him, and break up his rigidity. This is a possibility, but he does have an alternative. He can first realize the extent to which the power lies in the students, and see the impossibility and undesirability of keeping it always under thumb. We have already stated this argument, and will develop it further in the course of the discussion. Second, he can recognize the fact that attacks on his rules are not always attacks on himself. They are simply rebellions against rules in general. I say "not always" because the teacher must also be strong enough to withstand and try to understand attacks which *are* personal. Third, he may see what kind and degree of power he is dealing with, both in himself and in his students, and decide in what ways he wishes to use this power.

It is partly the teacher's relationship with his pupils which determines the nature of the power present in a teaching situation. One of the elements in this relationship is the tension between the institutional and personal roles played by the teacher. The power of personal leadership depends on the interaction of the personalities involved. In institutional leadership, where the relationship is predetermined, "personal influence is strained through the sieve of formality."² The teacher must recognize the distinction between his institutional and personal influence upon students, understanding that some of his power comes from his position as a teacher in a school and some comes from his own personality. When it is necessary for him to enforce institutional regulations, he should take a clinical view towards the problems involved. Waller suggests that punishment is

best when the entire group, teacher as well as pupils, is subordinated to a principle. The teacher then simply becomes a channel through which it is administered. At any rate, when administering rules objectively and apart from oneself, the teacher can better realize that attacks upon these rules are not attacks on his own person. On the other hand the teacher must not forget his responsibility for establishing a personal relationship with his students. For it is in personal leadership that even greater power can be released. It is in this relationship that the teacher must be aware of the needs of his students, and must be strong enough to understand rather than attacking back even when the student does resent or attack him personally. Discipline, says Waller, rests upon psychic arrangements in the minds of persons involved. These psychic arrangements are a result partly of personal influence and partly of the social standing of an office.

Another distinction which the teacher must make in establishing a relationship with his students, is the relative degree of entering into their activities and their lives. The question here, a crucial one, is that of the relationship of power and freedom. And it is one that can be answered only in terms of the individuals involved. The teacher must be able to judge how much ego-support the child needs. If a child is unable to cope with the difficulty of the situation, the teacher must help him with the problem, or give him the security of routines, or even of physical restraint. The assumption is, however, that the child will have greater creative power the more he can rely on himself without outside control. The more the teacher forces the child (who is strong enough) into new situations which he must cope with alone, the greater the power he has released within the student. The teacher's power exerted here is that described by Lippitt et al. as "the potentiality for inducing forces in other persons toward acting or changing in a given direction."³

Lewin, Lippitt and White had the same trained leaders direct groups with authoritarian, democratic, and *laissez-faire* methods in order to measure the varied reactions of the groups.⁴ There was more hostility and more apathy in the authoritarian and in the *laissez-faire* groups. The democratic groups, in which the leader gave support when needed and freedom when possible were the ones in which the teacher had more power in the sense of "inducing forces in other persons."

Redl and Wattenberg list specific ways in which the teacher can get the child to control his behavior. They call these "influence techniques," and though they presuppose some definite standards of behavior, there is a realization that control involves creating control within the children themselves. Simply looking at a person or coming

close to him, "stops unwanted behavior by mobilizing the youngster's internal force."⁵ Some writers stress the importance of letting children express their feeling and channeling them in creative directions. Redl and Wattenberg suggest a carefully guided gripe session. All of these suggestions, one must note, start with the students' feelings rather than the feelings of the teacher. (Miss Tarian was intent on guarding her own feelings.)

It is important to note that students want the teacher to be in control. They want to know that he is not afraid of them, and they need for him to give them security by creating balanced situations out of unbalanced ones. A teacher can give students security by dispelling tension through laughing at a situation. The children like a sense of humor because it tells them that the teacher is in control. The child, then, is not necessarily the little menace who is out to take away as much of the teacher's power as possible.

Children cast teachers in roles, the teacher sometimes having little choice as to the role or roles he prefers. The teacher may be an outlet for hostility feelings about their parents, or an object of love and affection giving them greater independence from their parents. He may play any number of roles placed upon him by the child. And all of these roles release power within the student—hostility and desire for independence in the two mentioned. The group as a whole has much to do with determining the nature of its leader. Redl and Wattenberg give the example of an experiment in Hungary when a group played together until it had set up a traditional pattern. Another child who was a strong leader was then put into the group. The original group refused to play the way he wanted; so the new child fell into the same pattern as the others. He did, however, exert his influence to change the pattern. Granted that this situation is different from a teaching situation, still it suggests the degree to which the group of students can force the teacher to adjust to their pattern at the same time that he is influencing them.

If we see power then as originating both in the teacher and in the students, we still must define the difference between group power and individual power. There are some who reify the group as an entity or power in itself. These people talk of the "group as a whole," and see the creation of group entities as potentially instrumental in bringing about a Better World. Freud, on the other hand, makes it clear that "group behavior is actually the behavior of individuals who are in a special process of social and emotional interaction."⁶ There are, however, group climates of opinion. And, in a sense, a group member gives up some of his power as an individual in order that the group may be stronger. A group then is a number of individuals

who have an added power through interrelationship with one another. The teacher may manipulate group powers in order to influence individuals. Or he may use an individual to influence the whole group. Always he must take into account the power of both. Redl and Watenberg describe ways in which the teacher can deal with behavior problems by helping the individual work out his own relationship with the group. Olga, the teacher's pet, was capable of adjusting herself to the group. The teacher supported her where she needed it, but mainly left her alone to work out the relationship herself. At other times, the teacher deals primarily with the group as a whole, as in the example of mass cheating. Redl's formula is that one should work through the individual so long as the group is not harmed, and through the group so long as the individual does not suffer.

Being aware of the precarious balance between individual and group, the teacher can next seek to recognize what group forces do exist, and what his relationship to them is. These forces may be both creative and destructive. In the first place, although belonging to a group is extremely important to the emotional security of the growing child, it may also be devastating to him if the group falls to pieces. Also, group conformity may diminish individual power. A group has a distinct atmosphere; some individuals may thrive in this atmosphere, while others will not get along at all. Transferring a child to another group can sometimes be helpful both for the child and for the group. The teacher has an important part, along with the members, in creating an atmosphere in which most of the group will be able to develop creatively.

Contagion of behavior is another group force which can be either good or bad. Undesirable behavior is frequently transferred from a small group or an individual to the whole class. The teacher must realize that he has very little control over such contagion. However, if a leader in the group is positive towards something the teacher is trying to "sell," then the power can be creative so far as the teacher is concerned. He can try to "start contagions" of desirable behavior, although subtle handling of such situations is essential, or they might become ludicrous. The teacher, too, may use the group for punishment purposes. He can punish a child by manipulating his status in the group—turning the group against him. This may be an unfair use of both group and teacher power, however, if the importance of a child's group status is greater than the importance of the punishment. The teacher here may be destroying power in the student for his own purposes. Group democratic judicial action can be enlightening, however. If objectively administered, such group action could hold more power than action by the teacher.

Group standards, says Redl, are usually stronger than teachers' codes. We have come a long way from Miss Tarian who whispers "power" into herself, while quietness echoes off her blackboard. How frightening for her to think that every individual has the power to react as he pleases to her, and that the group may have a stronger influence on itself than she has on it. These possibilities would be frightening, in fact, for all those who see in any release of individual or group forces, behavior or discipline problems.

But what about the teacher who, seeing the potentiality of this power, feels a responsibility for releasing it creatively? This picture may frighten him, too. But he must be warned again not to feel one hundred percent responsible. For the teacher can only use the utmost of his perception to try to tell, first, what degree of freedom and what degree of control are required, and, second, what kind of control is appropriate. That is as far as his power can go. He also must realize, as we have mentioned, the group and individual forces which are beyond his control. He must remember that his own force resides both in his own personality and in his institutional position, keeping in mind the limits of his professional position and therefore limiting himself in his aspirations. For the teacher who really sees the forces at work in himself, the group, and the individual student, may be overwhelmed by the complex possibilities involved. Miss Tarian's situation was a simple one. Lucky she was. And yet how much more of the wonder and the mystery of human life we can see in the new picture we have painted.

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SOCIAL ADJUSTMENT IN RETIREMENT

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Because more of us in North America live to the age of retirement by a very considerable margin than was true ten years ago, and conspicuously more than a quarter-century ago, the problems which retirement bring are more urgent than ever before. This tendency has surely not reached its apex. Therefore any ideas here brought forward may well find more extensive projection within the foreseeable future.

The social adjustment which retirement brings naturally involves different phases for each individual. However we as persons somewhat experienced in sociological study consider that in all probability the majority of cases will be found to fall into a few groups. Within each group of this sort, the adjustments required will be sufficiently similar to make group handling an effective, economical method for their consideration.

The transition from active business or professional life to the "harvest years" need not be looked upon as a period necessarily fraught with difficulties, insurmountable obstacles, or impasses. So to consider it is to forego any attempt at discerning what the genuine problems involved may be. We are considering the situations involved, in the same way, as we might those of the youth just starting in employment. Surely this is an intellectually legitimate approach.

Having said this much, let us now open the matter by the question as to when each individual needs to consider for the first time the social changes which he or she is destined to face upon the incidence of retirement.

Certainly, general experience indicates that those who have made some plans for their retirement, and especially those who have made, considered, and rejected several plans before making a decision, have accomplished the transition into retirement with the easiest social adjustments. Naturally, plans are made in terms of the continuance of certain associations which each individual may desire to maintain. However, tragedy such as the death of a spouse, or considerations of maintenance of health, often completely upset such plans. Despite the forced changes of plans for the retired years, the effort put into such planning has not been lost. From somewhere in the previous thinking, we may normally expect most individuals to discover nuclei around which to build a proposal for a different social adjustment.

No particular chronological age has thus far been established as even a normal retirement age, let alone one sociologically or biologi-

cally valid. This we might expect, since human traits are so exceedingly variable. The accepted "65 years limit" is in cold fact, only that age which certain large companies have established on the basis of experience. These same companies have established retirement ages as requirements for particular groups of their personnel. For instance, Esso Standard Oil Co. has been reported to insist on retirement at 62 for executives; but for other groups the age-limit is quite different.

Whatever the anticipated age at which one is likely to retire, the preceding years clearly require planning for the eventual result. Thus a goodly number of persons may well be constructing their future schemes of living as early as age 50. Indeed, certain favored individuals may be able to establish their proposed pattern of life even earlier. One of us who write, for example, decided in his later 40's, that he would continue his business, on however small a scale, as long as he was physically able, because it had become a satisfying way of life. Smaller concerns often afford an opportunity for semi-retirement for senior partners who continue on a consulting basis. Perhaps the most conspicuous such case occurred in a very large concern, General Electric. Charles E. Coffin for years after retirement had his office in the executive suite and was the man to whom the younger ones came as they felt his experience and counsel could be of help.

Another possibility, thus far little utilized, is to embark upon a new and different career perhaps in the same industry or business, after a retirement.

Planning for retirement may involve considerable guidance and education. In fact, whether it is formal or not, education is surely always involved. The extent to which such education has been attained is definitely the key to successful retirement. At present the opportunities for formal education directed towards the needs of those who plan to retire are very meager. This statement holds true at both the high school and the university level. The need has only now become apparent to the professional educators. The reader will understand that there are difficulties to be overcome, such as establishing contact with the men and women for whom such courses might be set up.

An encouraging sign is the number of papers on aspects of education for retirement, presented at the Twelfth Annual Higher Education Conference at New York University. These are printed in the January, 1957, number of this Journal. The reader who is interested in going beyond what we say here, can do no better than to read carefully that particular issue. Since the field of study is new, and there is so little significant antecedent literature, the student may well have difficulty in finding any worthwhile suggestions. Previous refer-

ences deal with aging itself rather than with retirement-adjustments to this phase of life.

For the larger number of those who plan to retire, education in the "worthy use of leisure time" is significant. The oldtime phrase just used is comprehensive but unfortunately still a little vague for practical purposes. We therefore envision it, at least in the situations we are discussing, as education in opportunities for community service, participation in those outdoor recreational activities likely to be both attractive and safe during the later years of life, interest in constructive and collecting hobbies to which many older persons are attracted. A further development in which education is necessary, is the consideration of developing an adult-life hobby into a post-retirement vocation. We include under this head the hobbies which one has not been able to follow during the active years but which retirement's leisure permits.

One phase of the education involved pertains to the locality in which one plans to reside in the harvest years. There are two dominant modes of thought and action in this respect. One is that of removal from the area of long residence and service to an entirely different milieu. How varied such removal may be is not immediately evident. The "accepted pattern" is that of "chasing the sun" to Florida, California, or even a South Sea Island. It is rather curious that under such conditions those who find such a change successful almost without exception make themselves into active citizens of their new community. They do not "loaf in the sunshine" but take on new, and sometimes more engrossing, activities than heretofore.

Less usual is the pattern of retiring either to one's boyhood home or a similar environment. The successful business man retiring to a farm in his home neighborhood of a half century earlier is not unknown. How successful in terms of satisfactions such returns are we do not here try to evaluate. Yet the satisfaction in such cases often depends upon making the farmstead self-supporting.

Remaining in one's own community after retirement is probably the more usual procedure. The problems in such a case may be more multifarious than if one moves away. However, if we are to judge by the examples known to us, a successful adjustment of this sort is apt to be productive of the highest degree of satisfaction to the individual concerned. Such problems as one's changed relation to community activities, the upsetting of long-established work-routines while still in the surroundings where such routines had daily begun, require thought and definite action. In suburban towns, the newly-retired man might well be looked upon as a community resource to be invited into all sorts of projects. Community Hospital, in Montclair, N. J., liter-

ally owes its new buildings to the fortunate involvement of two recently-retired men in the drive to raise the funds. We cite this as simply one typical example.

If one's bent on retirement is to follow up a cherished hobby, remaining in the home community is clearly indicated unless health requires a different climate. For one thing, the hobbyist cannot readily establish fruitful contacts with others following the same hobby, if he shifts to a new area. In many cases, the readjustment on moving, may suffice to deaden the love of the hobby. One of us who write had long toyed with the idea of removal to the Boston area, but decided that his own hobby likings could not be so well satisfied as in the present location. Also, his maintenance of his business on a small scale came much easier without change of location.

In many cases, the decision whether to remain in the same community or to seek new surroundings is decided by economic facts. The reduction from income while actively employed, to that in retirement, may be sufficiently drastic to force a change. Our judgement is that most persons retiring, would and do feel it badly, if they have to curtail their scale of living within the community in which they have long been members. Unless a part-time new job of some sort makes up for his deficiency or a substantial part thereof, removal to another and preferably a distant community may be felt necessary.

The extremely low cost of comfortable quarters in such places as the Braden Castle colony near Bradenton, Florida, has undoubtedly made this a real haven for retired persons who otherwise would find themselves seriously hampered in money matters. Such havens exist in fair numbers in various parts: we have cited just one long-established example. Our understanding is that the provisions made by fraternal organizations, such as that at Moosehaven, Florida primarily serve members of those bodies. We therefore merely mention these provisions in passing.

The actual income which one has on retiring is the basis for the plan of life adopted. This income is for many derived in major part from social security and from pensions. Self-established trust funds, annuities purchased with retirement in view, or well handled investments with satisfactory returns, will in some cases augment, and in others perhaps almost wholly replace, the social security or pension income. One problem involved is whether investment management is to become literally one's new vocation upon retirement. This is more strikingly the case when rental real estate has been the preferred investment. The time and effort involved in maintenance of buildings would appear to have made this last older favorite form of investment for retirement farther unwise in modern days.

From all current literature, it appears that the absolute minimum income on which a couple with the breadwinner retired, can subsist in dignity and decency, is in 1957 approximately \$2000.00. To maintain a fairly good life, with needed "extras" such as hospitality, recreation and full medical care, the apparent necessary figure in 1957 for such a couple would seem to be \$5000.00. This information is something on which those faced with or preparing for retirement should be informed.

The maintenance of the necessary income can be a real task for the retired person. Alertness to changes affecting income may perhaps be the educative result in this field, towards which the most effort is likely to be needed. Switching of investments from those declining in income-production cannot be accomplished haphazardly nor by neglect. A certain amount of continual alertness on this aspect is thus indicated as a needed portion of education for retirement. The steady "slow burning" inflation of the last ten years underlines this matter with strong emphasis. This inflation, which is only a more rapid phase of what has gone on for centuries, seems most likely to continue at not less than the current rate.

What has thus far been set forth is primarily the situation as it exists. If we have seemed to omit certain aspects, that is because our judgment is that they are less significant than those we have discussed. For the purpose of this article, we necessarily had to establish, perhaps subjectively, a scale of values that would decide what aspects we might most beneficially consider. It is our hope that others, more impressed with aspects we have not handled, will come forward with articles supplementing what we have said.

In facing retirement, one aspect, on which there has been a fair amount of discussion, is that of the maintenance of health. There are numerous books which give the general pattern for living in the later years. However, most of these do not come sufficiently to grips with the special problems involved in retirement, to give the maximum service possible. Furthermore, almost every person faced with retirement is likely to be sure that his is a special, a different case.

The plain fact is that adequate professional counsel is needed in matters of health, on facing or attaining retirement. Precisely, as in matters financial, a new situation normally has developed. The amount of exercise for keeping in condition is probably not changed; but the circumstances and methods of getting it will almost surely be drastically altered. This is only one of many dozen instances that we might cite. The need for professional advice, competent and informed, is as definite in health as in finance.

But, one might well ask, where can the person faced with retire-

ment secure the professional advice he needs? This is the emerging question to which not even a more than fragmentary reply can as yet be given.

Unfortunately, up to the time of writing, we have not been able to locate much help. The number of adult education projects which include any phase of preparation for retirement is exceedingly limited. We have not yet noticed any University pioneering with such courses, on a scale and with publicity sufficient to meet this challenge. There are "straws in the wind" however, such as the March 1957 announcement of pre-retirement counseling program of the New York State Civil Service. Perhaps the real pilot work may need to be done by large industrial companies, among whose executives there is probably much understanding of the urgency. We would not exclude large banks and retail chain concerns from being such workers in the development of the curricula and methods for such education.

Inasmuch as chairs of departments in Universities dealing with planning and education for retirement will be dealing with persons from all walks of life, quite clearly their place is not limited to the graduate schools of education. Indeed, locating them in such schools may limit their clientele to the practitioners of education, missing those other who could profit equally well. Thus, the Graduate Schools of Arts and Sciences in the various universities up and down the nation, may well be the most serviceable sites for such instruction. In particular, the urban universities, which can be reached without loss of time and effort by those not yet retired, seem the logical ones to undertake this new service.

For any foundation seeking to use its resources to expand our educational structure where it can most render needed service, this field of education bearing upon planning for retirement and actual retirement, might well be one that is most attractive.

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EVALUATION IN EDUCATION*

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I propose to devote this discussion for the most part to a consideration of two basic assumptions which underlie some of my thinking in education, and which have been the source of some concern to me. These, to me, are truths which are self-evident.

We hear much about the necessity for continuous evaluation of our work in education. This evaluation, we are told, should be followed by modification of procedures where necessary, by re-evaluation, re-modification, etc. I am troubled about the use of "immediate" criteria in this evaluation process, since I assume that it is far more important that we consider the "ultimate" effect upon our children of the education to which they are exposed than that we consider their initial reactions. This in a way is the essence of our difficulty in evaluating the teaching process, because we must educate children for adult life in an unknown world of tomorrow, through the medium of childhood experiences in the world of today.

Perhaps some illustrations will make this clear. I recall some authoritarian teachers whose children worked assiduously at all times while behaving like ladies and gentlemen. Moreover, tests both unstandardized and standardized showed very high immediate results. Yet, it was impossible in each of these cases to find a substitute teacher who could control the class in the absence of the teacher. They had been trained to respond only to the commands of their assigned teacher and could not operate without him.

Now, if I were to define the teacher's (or parent's) function in one sentence I would say it is to prepare children to live without him, as they will have to when they leave him. So although the authoritarian teacher may show excellent results in terms of immediate criteria, he evidently fails in respect to at least one of the most important of the ultimate criteria.

Similar considerations are pertinent to the problem of the dictatorial supervisor who may obtain better immediate results than his more modern colleague does, but who fails miserably in the ultimate sense.

In fact, it is not at all unusual for actions which result in apparently improved immediate results to have long-term negative effects. For example, we have all seen many children who cannot read because

* An address to Rho Chapter, Phi Delta Kappa.

early in their lives, someone drilled them "not wisely but too well," thereby creating a block to the learning of reading later in life. Yet someone observing the original process of drilling might well have said that a conscientious teaching job was being done in terms of immediate criteria.

My experience as a teacher of mathematics proved to me the futility of arithmetic teaching, the goal of which was merely immediate results. Any high school mathematics teacher can tell you that arithmetic knowledges based on rote and devoid of understanding are forgotten shortly after being learned, and in any case cannot be used as the foundation for higher learning.

We are all familiar with the lack of meaning inherent in high test marks attained by cramming for the test rather than by growth in understanding. In my role as a member of the Board of Examiners, this problem has deep significance to me.

A second assumption I would like to discuss at this point, is that we are professionally obligated at all times to be certain that we are doing only those things which meet the objectives of education toward which we are currently aiming. Too often we continue to do things which once met appropriate objectives long after they have lost their meaning.

I remember once asking someone to explain to me why he urged that all children be required to wear white shirts or blouses to assembly, even though teachers were not to be so required. This particularly puzzled me since some very poor children in the area, which was underprivileged, did not possess white shirts and came to school in neat, clean, colored shirts. These children suffered intensely under the requirement just indicated. I was told in all sincerity, that the reason for insisting upon white shirts was that it looked so attractive to visiting adults! I wonder whether the person advocating this procedure ever considered whether it met any worthwhile acceptable objective of education. I can recount many memories of other fairly common procedures, similarly purposeless in terms of educational objectives.

Benjamin in his classic "The Sabretooth Curriculum," speaks allegorically of the caveman society which once had slow moving fish, sabre-tooth tigers, and little woolly horses. Although all this changed once the climate changed, the children continued to learn how to catch slow fish by hand even if their teachers now had to daze fast fish by clubbing them in order to make them slow; they went on learning how to frighten by torch a poor caged tiger brought from afar for this special purpose, and how to club the now non-existent horses.

I wonder whether in many respects we today are not teaching our children to club non-existent horses.

For example, I have often wondered about the high school mathematics curriculum, which is based not on medieval concepts but rather on ancient ones. The fact that Geometry in the high schools is taught in a demonstrative fashion while Algebra is not, is merely the result of an historical accident, since both subjects lend themselves equally well to the demonstrative approach. It so happens that the Greeks who developed Geometry thought in the demonstrative fashion while the Arabs who developed Algebra did not. If we were to develop *de novo* a high school mathematics curriculum to meet today's children's needs in the world of tomorrow, I warrant that it would hardly resemble the present one. Remember the remarkable developments in mathematics in the past few years, none of which is reflected at all in our ancient-oriented mathematics curriculum. The recent introduction of some analytic Geometry under the title of "Coordinate Geometry" hardly dents the surface.

Perhaps in this respect, Semantics is an enemy of no mean dimensions. We had to discard the terms, "Latin Grammar School" and "Academy" because of the philosophies and practices they connoted. Perhaps the expression, "High School" needs to be abandoned for similar reasons. For example, let us look at some figures on the percentage of the 14 to 17 year age group which was enrolled in high schools in the United States since 1880:

<i>Year</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Year</i>	<i>%</i>
1880	2.8	1920	37.9
1890	6.9	1930	51.1
1900	11.4	1940	91.6
1910	16.6		

The trend is still upward, of course. Who are these additional students? The majority of them are, by and large, less academically apt than those who formerly attended. Now what is to be done with them? They do not fit into the kind of school curriculum connoted by the expression "high school" and so we are often told they do not belong because they are not "high school material." Neither the vocational high schools, planned for the potential skilled worker, nor the academic high school, planned for the pre-professional students, can accommodate these unskilled and semi-skilled workers-to-be, and so, after being rejected by all, they are forced on someone and are given a makeshift watered-down program of little value to them.

What is the answer to this problem? I do not know. What I do know is that an answer must be found or we will continue to do a grave injustice to many. Perhaps the answer is close to Scarsdale's

Superintendent Archibald Shaw's "Random Falls" proposal in which he talks among other things of civic and occupational activities in community life on a cooperative time basis by all students. These experiences are then brought to school and become part of the school curriculum. Perhaps the answer is something else, but we must insist upon our secondary schools' meeting the needs of all the students as they are today in order to prepare them to live better tomorrow.

I could, of course, continue to speak of the concepts in education which to me are true and basic. However, neither you nor I could afford to spend the time that that would take, and so I shall devote myself to one or two conclusions I come to on the basis of the assumptions I have made.

It seems to me that an educator must be able to accomplish the infinitely difficult feat of helping mold a human being for a successful lifetime, and also that he must be constantly alert to the significance of the changes in an increasingly dynamic world so that he can correspondingly modify the objectives of, and consequently the substance of his educational program. This requires training in philosophies, attitudes, skills, and understandings beyond those we have always in the past expected of our teachers. The rapidly growing disciplines of human relations, demanding understanding of the values of mankind and that of group dynamics with its many discoveries in the area of the group process, are merely illustrations of the growing world of knowledge with which the educator must be familiar.

The acquisition of the knowledge of all the necessary arts and sciences inherent in good teaching, it seems to me, is as demanding and as important a task as that involved in preparing for the highest of the other professions. I am, therefore, most troubled about the comments one often hears about converting, with practically no pedagogical training, subject-matter specialists into teachers. I submit that the profession of teaching has enough significant substance to stand up proudly as a self-sufficient reality, and that there is probably more in common between the kindergarten teacher and the college professor than there is between the mathematician and the high school teacher of mathematics. In fact, I sometimes wonder whether there is always high correlation between knowledge of a subject and the ability to impart it to others.

There is a grave present danger to our children and to the profession as well, which is the misuse of closed circuit television. One university has even gone to the lengths of preparing enough period-length films on physics so that an entire year's course in physics could be "taught" without any teacher in the room, simply by "piping" from a central source, the appropriate film each day to every physics class-

room. The ignorance of the true meaning of education inherent in this proposal needs little explanation. Only little worse is the proposal to have one master teacher broadcast live lessons into many rooms. To me, these proposals seem almost sacrilegious in their disregard of the almost sacred relationship between teacher and child. Certainly, the teacher, about whom Henry Adams said so wisely, that he "affects eternity" is not so easily dispensable. My experiences in observing this television approach in various places have convinced me that it has failed miserably. Of course, there is a real place for television, in education as an opportunity for giving children another medium for creative self-expression as they broadcast to other children, and as another audio-visual aid to be used by a competent teacher in the time-proved manner for good use of such aids. However, as a substitute for the teacher, it is totally unacceptable.

It appears to me that these thoughts represent a tremendous task for teacher professional organizations. They should rise up in unison and devote their energies to combating the downgrading of the profession inherent in these proposals for lowering requirements for admission to the profession and for replacing the teacher by a robot called television. Simultaneously, these organizations must demand continued and continuous self-improvement on the part of the teachers already in service. Only by this kind of effort will the profession attain the competence, the status, and the salary scales it deserves. It is foolish for teacher organizations to waste their energies crying for salary increases while they stand by idly as requirements for admission to the profession are lowered. Only by elevating the profession and demanding that newcomers prove readiness to meet these higher standards will salary increases and improved working conditions really be attained, for that is the only way in which these more competent teachers can be recruited. As I see it, anything else represents betrayal of the children to whom we have devoted our lives.

In conclusion, may I offer my humble prayer that the day is not distant when each teacher will every day question what he has been doing. Moreover, may I hope that he will as well be constantly alert to the need for improving his procedures so that he may better meet the needs of his children as they get ready to meet the frightening, challenging, and yet hopeful world of tomorrow.

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BOOK REVIEW

Occupational Information. By Robert Hoppock. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1957. \$6.75.

Outstanding and comprehensive is this latest contribution of Robert Hoppock, Professor of Education at New York University, to the literature concerning occupational information. ~

Carefully blended into Chapters 1 through 6 are the various essentials of occupational information, which include the need for study of occupations, the kinds of occupational information required by counselor and counselee, and the sources, appraisal, and methods of classifying as well as filing such information.

In Chapters 7 through 9 there is an important section of this volume that is devoted to the theory of occupational choice and the contributions of client-centered counseling to the field of vocational counseling. Data from many disciplines, including those of educators, economists, psychologists, and sociologists help to interpret the different theories.

Particularly relevant to the areas of counseling and occupational information are Chapters 10 through 12. Chapter 10 distinctly illustrates the thoroughness of the author's research by his summarization of the statements of forty-eight authors on the use of occupational information in counseling.

Chapters 13 through 25 include an enlarged revision of the author's well-known *Group Guidance*. Timely topics such as: the teaching of occupations; students follow up alumni; plant tours; group conferences; students survey beginning jobs; case conference; laboratory study; self-measurement; other methods of getting and using occupational information; suggestions for beginners; suggestions for school and college administrators; suggestion for college teachers; and evaluation offer a wide range of valuable tips gleaned directly from Professor Hoppock's broad background and practical experience.

Chapter 26 reviews the role of occupational information in the elementary school and considers primary purposes as well as activities. The author has also incorporated a number of miscellaneous items concerning occupational information in Chapter 27.

The Appendix contains a variety of forms illustrating the techniques and methods described in previous chapters. Additional welcome material includes: a history of the teaching of occupations; lesson plans; assignments for counselors in training; a list of prin-

cial publishers; suggestions for discussion leaders; demonstration group and case conference; outline for the study of an occupation; and demonstration practice job interview. Extensive documentation throughout the book as well as thoughtful review questions create an incentive for further study.

In summation Professor Hoppock's contribution should serve as an important resource for all who are concerned with occupational information and counseling.

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